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Love-Fugue



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Love=Fugue



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THE ROMANCE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
ATLANTA, BELFAST,
55 N. Forsyth St. 3 Crown Place.

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And the love that is o'er, in expiring, gives birth
To a new one as warm, as unequalled in bliss.
And oh ! if there be an Elysium on earth,
It is this, it is this.

THOMAS MOORE.



“That wrinkled woe.”

I.

I know not why I yet live. I am by the rules of romance, by the sequels of fiction, by the laws of love, condemned to die—and by my plighted vow I should be dead.

I said to the woman of fifty winters of sorrow, "Should that maiden whom I yonder see as the golden east in the evening, fill my cup with gall, I shall spill it on a lifeless heart."

Peace to the shade of that wrinkled woe! Thou art gone who boasted not, yet suffered! I who clamored am yet alive! Thus resolution ripples away in words and leaves this

ennui, the dregs of action. But now since thy brains are out canst thou tell me, is there balm in death? What occupation finds thy soul at present? Is thy mind thinking? thy heart feeling? Is there emotion beyond the veil? Is there will? Is there suffering? Ah God! is there love?

Perhaps I was restrained by the arm of God, and may have wished to see this weary organism sink by sweet decomposition to its mother earth. It may be I had not the requisite energy, for often have I longed to die could I do so without effort, but when energy arose it produced a tolerance, if not a pleasure, of life. One love-touched moment will bind us by hope to an eternity of morrows. I may have disliked to

please the envious, pay that highest tribute to woman's power, and confer the keenest delight if her heart indeed were vain. Possibly I shrank through fear from death. Probably contemplation of the means, for my nature is too reflective, restrained my arm. Surely it was philosophy, philosophic fear, or fearing doubt.

Would I improve my condition? Ah! could I only know that death is unawakable sleep, that eternity is dreamless night, that worms and dust is all forever! Had this accursed restraint of fear—or Faith—not ever menaced my thought, I could have acted.

It had been well too had I gone to the clod and escaped all the agony of a spirit too easily perturbed and therefore too deeply damned. But

would I, a ghost, be less perturbed? Would I not look back to the misery of life as a boon, and utter the cries of a soul more deeply damned? Would I not leap into the prophetic knowledge of what life and love might have been, and in death regret life?

Should it be the nature of the soul to live I could not kill it. The heart was the seat of all that deep woe. Such attempt to stifle the mind might only quicken conscience, render the emotions more susceptible, the soul more sensitive, and thus intensify all my woes and add, one more dreadful.

So, departed shade of my weary Aunt, forgive my life! Forget or palliate my word! I but live a life for which occasion has not yet occurred to be thankful. Art thou, though, thankful for death?

II.

I talk to the Ghost of time. I am the son of my past. We dance jubilee together,—myself and the spectres gathered up by the way,—we sing ; we paint ; we revere ; we create ; we revile. We will solve the problem of our existence, discover our origin, gloat at our affinity with the clod, unfurl the scrolls of the heart and read from the finger of God fragments of his revelation.

There is in this mansion not made with hands a gloom which is not of night, but like an eclipse in the day.

It may be the shadow of sorrow's wing, for hovering here she hatched a brood of woes perhaps wingless.

It is hardly a mansion—a mere shanty—and probably not in God's house—not thronged with guests—where many friends of a day have come of their own accord and similarly gone—where a few have come and been enfolded as 'twere their own, and theirs indeed it was. But they have gone and that is why it now's in ruin. Yet some gracious god has kindly dreamed of me for nigh to thirty years. Were we less indolent and earthy more worlds might exist. My senses grow dull; my soul slumbers. Let me dream, and new and old beings shall whirl about my brain. **THEY ARE MINE—AND I AM THEIRS.**

III.

It was a night of June, that season when the heavens most emphasize the glory of God. But the heavens had spoken ten thousand nights to this child unheeded. What are the stars, the firmament, night, day, tempests and the lightnings, compared to WOMAN'S burning eye ! One is the handiwork, the other—God. Hope immortal swelled my breast, eternal in the instant grew my soul, and boldly into the abyss I dropped my heart, then feeling myself about to look on God, Moses-like sank back and trembled.

In the garden she stood neatly robed in that simplicity which becomes beauty. A hundred thoughts he had meant to speak, but while at a distance the movement of his heart increased to palpitation. He approached, and under her calm and dignified, easy, pleasant and agreeable demeanor, all mental power was incased in the intensity of feeling. He perceptibly shook with the palsy of love. Speech was choked by abnormal emotion. He stammered out a "good evening," and at distant intervals gave thick-tongued utterance to a few platitudes, occupying the painful moments of silence in cursing timidity and imploring heaven for courage requisite to decent



“In the garden she stood, neatly robed in that simplicity
which becomes beauty.”

expression of himself. But his heart was hopelessly entangled in the embarrassment of unrequited love, and his desperate agony continued till the town clock announced his departing hour. He fell to his knee, pressed her hand with intense devotion to his lips, and scarcely daring to raise his eyes to hers, reeled dizzily away to the train that should bear him forever away.

Sympathy will avoid the presence of excessive grief, and the freshly wounded heart shuns the officiousness of friends. It is needless to distress ourselves by harkening to the undertoned escape of smothered sobs; when feelings and thoughts find articulate expression we will attend.

He traveled alone, whence and whither equally inconsequent since our paramount impressions depend not upon place, but are due to persons. Such marble was his soul for retention, however, that his temporary destination was attributable to nothing other than the mental image he carried of an old stereoscopic view dropped to him as a lad by a sombre visitor for a week in his father's house.

So soon do magnetic souls attract reacting forces that after three days we see him enter a summer inn closely followed by one of portly and dignified form and bearing, and conscious of the fine eye of intelligent interest from behind, scrawl across the register a line of carelessly illegible characters, making with a

significant glance at the stranger, a peculiar mark at the end.

An hour later in the cool of the evening upon that veranda fronting the lake, this handsome man with iron-gray moustache and goatee upon a face which placed him doubtfully on either side of fifty, formally introduced himself to our lover by offering a cigar.

"Young man, you gave me an agreeable surprise to-day."

"Indeed? It is gratifying to be the source of pleasure."

"That fine sentiment," said the elder, with a smile, "didn't inflict mortification upon a bold woman on the train a few hours ago."

"Silently and simply, though perhaps with visible resentment, I declined her rather indiscreet challenge to a flirtation."

"You will perceive," said the stranger uncovering a thin head of sleek silver hair, "that I have seen much of life. I have experienced all its phases. I know humanity well, and have made enough use of its frailty to be deeply disgusted by such cheap and common conduct of women; and though I have been on the road for twenty-eight years, I never before saw a young man of spirit and intelligence resist an appeal from a fair woman for a night's festivity. I did not expect the gratification of seeing her turned away abashed and confused by a look of severe contempt."

"My action, sir, which you evidently witnessed, justly indicated my feeling. It simply rebuked indiscretion. True the lady and her companion attracted the attention of the car,

but only by innocent gaiety. Her bold and rather indelicate appeal would never have been made had she been alone, and had I taken up the glove she would have cut the affair short at the station. You judge the conduct, did not observe the lady, her clean face, her eye brilliant with mischief, her fine forehead shown by the artful arrangement of her frizzes. For an instant something shadowed my mind as by the dim return of the long lost vision of a dream. Momentarily the like seemed to swim before her lashes, and she was embarrassed; if bad she would not have been abashed. Did you fail to observe that she was met by a motherly woman, who may have been her aunt, and borne from the depot in a private carriage? Everything indicated that

she is vivacious, nothing that she is vicious."

"Young man," rejoined the drummer with serious mirth, "you speak the words of a novice with the tongue of an oracle. When you have traveled longer you will know more and think you know less. Woman ogles only with an evil eye; believe me, there isn't a virtuous hair in existence."

"Let me disabuse you of the error that I am on the road."

"Eh! but the mark?"

"To secure your acquaintance, my wise senior, and at the office your advantage over the tourist."

"Indeed!" returned the drummer with agreeable chagrin, "No similar restraint now that we are met. You summon and I will tip. Learn of the music aboard yonder."

"I have, sir, expecting alone to kill the night. 'Tis the 'Swan' out for a dancing excursion up the lake. Her tour extends several hours into the moonlight."

"Alone, eh? Come, didn't you mean to keep an outlook for the long lashes your sleek eye followed even into the carriage with her 'aunt?' But, shall we take the sail?"

"I am perfectly willing."

Together they left the veranda, the lover not particularly attentive to the remarks of his senior upon the distant lake view with its undulating shore, enhanced in solemn beauty by a circling strip of inky cloud purple-hemmed by the viewless sun. The young man from the key of their short talk was solving the character of the stranger. Indeed, it is difficult to say

if they were different in spiritual constitution, or if their fascinating antagonism of thought and feeling was due to difference of age, experience and late impression. The elder was a satire on life, settled, disdainful contentment with its lowest pleasures. The younger was a sonnet of hope, doubtful yearning for something above the best of humanity. His heart was centered upon woman, his worship was of woman, and he felt that through woman he had gained his highest glimpse of the divine, and that her virtues were his temple of faith. Yet at the traveler's assault he was not chagrined, because his own trust was no innate conviction, but new as the love in his heart. Nor was he even surprised, since under the results of his past conduct

he had often doubted himself nearly into the same despair of feminine fidelity. But under present feelings he would not disregard the cue to a subject of paramount interest, though he would pursue it after his usual custom, not to controvert, but to call up the full strength of opposition and reflectively pit it against the strongest of his own thoughts, that he might hold nothing not tenable.

Thus it was when seated comfortably on deck just as the "Swan" swinging about gave them a little stir of the oven-warm air, that the young man said in his low indifferent tone:

"My friend, you have a long while upon this treacherous sea captained your life-bark without a mate."

"You assume."

"You are indeed an old man never to have loved."

"You assume more."

As these feints completely failed to arouse any activity in his companion, the young man immediately resolved upon a direct thrust, with what admirable result we shall see.

"I infer," said he with some emphasis, "no heart holding even the cinders of love would throw such blackness over woman."

"I judged you to be older," ejaculated the elder. "You seem inclined to prolong the verdant season. To the infatuation called love there isn't enough substance to produce ashes."

"But its tremendous power?"

"Do you not know of the philosophy which unmistakably traces our emotions to two primary instincts?"

Nothing can be stronger than commingled pride, emulation, delight of conquest, sense of property, and fierce, impetuous passion. Love concentrates in one breast, the feelings of the courtier, hero, conqueror, miser and brute. It is quintuple craving, a spasm of the senses, tumultuous insanity of desires, which subsides as they are satiated. 'Tis a throng of embosomed contentions, a group of imprisoned demons wreaking intemperate vengeance by swinging upon the heart-strings and gnawing at their roots, choking the channels of the blood, wildly trampling underneath and clutching at the inner throat above: and if that fever is now raging in this bosom," continued the drummer, firmly tapping our lover's lapel, "arise to the dignity of a man and fling the furies out."

The young man drew slightly back somewhat surprised and a little piqued. But his self-confidence was absolute, and this range and system now added to the stranger's force of thought, made him only the more anxious to hear full disquisition of this phase of the subject. He therefore suggested that if love were indeed but the union of these sentiments its force might be thus referred, but that this certainly could not explain its virtuous incentives, righteous resolves and aspirations, quivering buoyancy of soul, immortal faith, transcendent hope for lucid joys eternal, aerial fancies—sub-lunar reflections from heaven—spiritual dreams and evanescent worship: which elicited a bitter smile from the elder, with this response:

“The delirium, my friend, is over in

a day. To-morrow curiously you will watch the illusions vanish. If then you reflect upon what now I say, you will understand their whence and whither.

“Sympathy, affection, reverence, loyalty, conscience, arise from the multifarious play of social forces. As tribes expand into nations savage impulse attenuates into public opinion; embosomed excitements fiercely responsive to the former become latent under the latter, or little active; the moral faculties somewhat subside and are less vivid than under the play of their creative sentiments. But as human attachments arose from a similarity in the individuals grouped, the deepest affection will attach those of most similar taste, disposition, capacity. Within this circle of the few

who are esteemed the moral senses requicken. Fac-similes meet; counterparts join; Two—mutually extol and adore; for each all the social forces radiate from the other. Pride, and the sense of glory and shame, awaken; approval is sought; self-esteem flattered; sentiments commingle, emotions compound, motives coalesce; ancestral blood fevers the veins, around this physical feeling clusters the overwhelming aggregate of psychical excitements; woman sinks bewildered into abandoning trust, man reels in the frenzy of exultant liberty, and two lovers cement their souls in an embrace of all-enfolding possession.”

The sarcasm which tainted the last of this speech evoked from the young man the charge that his companion

was unduly enthusiastic to convince another of what to himself was of only morose and bitter satisfaction: To which the stranger agreeably responded that he never had thrust upon any mind a disagreeable truth; that his elucidation had been elicited; that furthermore he well understood how little convincing to fancy were facts, and that he wished our lover, if he could by avoiding philosophy and fact, to enjoy his dream until experience forced him to realize and feel the fickle frailty of the vain sex under property, flattery and passion.

Then to the music and dance which had begun he turned as if away from an image of distress, and after a moment asked if the young man did not mean to choose a partner.

LOVE.

Some conception of the effect of love may be gained from the influence of poetry and music. These seem an opening of the mind to beauties above us. We are impressed as with the near wafting of a cloud of Adenn caught perfumes, wrapt in whose light folds is a gay troop of sprightly fairies. So true is this that Landor inquires of poetry "whether it is not to be referred to some purer state of sensation and existence;" and Richter says to music: "Away! away! Thou speakest to me of things which in all my endless life I have not found and shall not find." So love, which is

the source of all art, unites the force of these and many like influences, to bear us into the presence of "hovering and evanescent beauty," nigh to the confines of some spiritual world, where with Whittier we

*Dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight.*

We are thrown into the peculiar state arising from a union of intense eagerness of actual enjoyment with the infinite agitation of hopeless pursuit. With ardent hilarity we clasp to our throbbing heart this cluster of immortal joys, and with intensified sensibilities weep for celestial raptures which are revealed but *not* bestowed.

These revelations, however, are not distinctly marked outlines of celestial realms nor clear-cut angel features.

They are but intense suggestions of uncertainties. Of the unseen and spiritual we are never sure. This is the torment of lovers. We are skeptical of the virtue that has overcome us. We suspect beauty to be a hovering delusion. We doubt that we pay our deepest devotion to a chimera. A friend writes me thus—"My lady is that rose of beauty which is the flowering of virtue, a serene, sincere and noble woman; *do* you think she can be a coquette?" I answer that within his heart must he solve his problem, which to me is no problem, since I am too indifferent to his lady to suspect her sincerity. The ecstatic moments of a lover's serenest faith are broken by obscure forebodings and agonizing dreads. The ideal possibilities of virtue awakened within himself he fears

will not be realized in her who is the object of his affections. These doubts, and the near hovering of unattainable joys give to love its tincture and hue of solemnity. It falls in upon the soul "at once like a bitter and a balm;" and fills the bosom with what Irving calls "a soft tumult of pleasing pains." It pacifies yet perturbs. Into the hours of crystal trust are dropped moments of lurid suspicion. It fires the soul. The beautiful object of love's first hope possessed is a magic opening of avenues through which we aspire to realms of diviner bliss. We do not rest. Out of the very skepticism of the lover are born to him resolutions that he will merit the highest virtue of the maiden. As love was his revelation so now does woman become his religion. To him she is "a sacred

precinct. We know that we must deserve to be gods before we enjoy the divine moment in its plenitude.

Only since meeting the philosophical analysis of love, only since knowing that nearly all incentives springing from the social instincts enter into its composition, only since realizing that into this irresistible passion are aggregated all our sympathies, affections and emotions, have I understood the expression of *Count Orsino* in *Twelfth Night*:

*When the rich golden shaft
Hath killed the stock of all affections else.*

In the lover's heart his maiden usurps the place of society. For her is undertaken his labors. For her exists his virtue. Her desire is his incentive. Her approval is his glory, her

love his reward. Her disapproval is his doom to solitude, to rueful regret, whence the unhappy answer :

*Only so far afflicted, that we live
Desiring without hope.*

Paradise has been revealed and entrance refused. The heart is haunted by ideals of beauty and delight which are never to be enjoyed. Since attainment is impossible, effort is useless. Life is without, purpose hence without energy, without ambition.

We are often told of the redeeming power, of the elevating potency of a single expression of woman's love. We should be told also of the degradation sure to follow her adverse word. However tempered with sympathy it is an exhalation of death. The philosopher would predict dis-

astrous consequences to having the clustered emotions thrust from their center of attraction. The poet would foretell sad results of any violence to "The flock of all affections." The Biographer proclaims of the unhappy lover, that, "the river of his history here dashes itself over that terrific Lover's Leap; and, as a mad foaming cataract, flies wholly into tumultuous clouds of spray."

Upon the smile as from the frown of

Her who was his destiny,

man has arisen to the strength and virtue of gods and the bliss of heaven, or sank to the terrible depth and dreadful destiny of fiends with a mangled soul.

IV.

In that ethereal realm where phantacies entertain the heart with tragic mimicry, I long after went dancing, gliding, floating down the maple-arched avenue of that former garden scene—swaying and tossing arms and head and legs, twirling an ebony cane in harmony with the music of my soul, while the trees bowed and waved and danced in time to the twirling of the cane—the stars shot and flashed like fireworks in the night—and on the revel went, until the moon's cynic grin over the mountain-top caught my eye, which caught the object of his sardonic glance. The cane fell! I

stood aghast! Nature was transfixed, half-bowed in awful reverence! For there SHE stood, serene, composed, natural, in the sphere of the gods. Her eye caught mine. Overcome, I recovered myself, and turned to take a godlike pace away. Oh! Shadowy vision of the eternal world! Hovering evanescence of gardens and their goddess! Rapturous transfiguration of the real! Heaven-wafted waif of woman! The DREAM of her radiance descended along my path above, and seemed to say with the glow of dawn and breath of fields, "an instant to choose her for life, or me forever." Mortal again, I turned an appealing look into my lady's eyes. Indignantly she drew her graceful height and said, "you've used your time of choice in pause," and vanished. Reel-

ing, bewildered, I saw with dizzy look
that smiling shadow approach, suffuse
its breath upon me, touch my bosom,
decrease and disappear within. My
frame shook, my heart quivered, I
staggered, gasped, awoke, and fell
fainting into life.

A LETTER.

MY FRIEND :

I had not heard and wept at the news of her marriage with the old man. Somehow I had always trusted she would not in that manner sacrifice her heart and ambition, her higher hopes. You know I often thought of her, even though I had become self-contained, even though I had by that visit disillusioned myself. Who can blot out an impression indelible? What shall I say now that I have dried the tear? Simply this, he who has a wife without love, has a woman without fidelity.

Once I saw a heap of gold. I knew many pleasures it would buy. It was only across the way, a brief and easy journey. And the gold shone in all its mellowest brilliancy. Its huge round pieces looked as smiling an invitation as large coquettish eyes from under auburn locks. And out of its bulk arose robust form, which swayed to and fro, and beckoned with two strong graceful arms, till all its brilliancy was concentrated into one intense appeal. What miser would it not have crazed? But *I* was *not* a miser.

In proportion as we are inspired by any tender emotion, passion is subdued until in profound and perfect love, it disturbs the thoughts only with ideal images of the future child. No man who has loved and been loved can think without a shudder of a babe coming into the world the off-spring of aught but love.

Madam, have you contemplated the awful Eternal fatalities hinging upon your act? You have cheated God of a noble posterity. How many thousands of years is the world retarded by this duplicity in every generation! Hadst thou allied thy brow whose lofty arch startled and evercame me

with speechless wonder when first I raised its heavy veil of deep brown locks, hadst thou allied thy perfect physiognomy, thy symmetry of soul, thy matchless form to love-inspired and noble youth—which was possible, for you said you had awakened love in other hearts than mine and the old man's—what virtue and genius would then have graced thy Daughter and Son. Thou wouldst have sat an eternal queen, Mother to an endless line of immortal souls. But *now*—what will thy children be! Or *will*—any accident happen?



AN EPISODE.

One evening, a few days after the events of the moonlight excursion, our lover threw himself on one end of a rustic bench on the eastern shore, and sat looking downward over the lake to the west. As the sun yet lingered on the summit of the opposite hill, he had forward and low drawn his hat as a shade, and on an open book resting on his knee apparently rested his eyes, whose gaze, however, was vacant, since he was lost in reflection upon the shallow freaks of the human heart, more fluctuating than the bending waters below.

After a time he became conscious of an approaching step, then of a

gentle touch upon the right shoulder, and of a mellow voice sounding sweetly in his ear this articulation :

“Being here yet you must have found some enchantment in our woods and lake?”

“ I should have soon discarded hope of finding any prolonged attraction but for my good fortune in this meeting.”

The lady, struck by some peculiarity of his voice or speech, threw her penetrating glance full into his eyes, approached, placed her hand on the book he held over his folded arms, and scanned him as if she would know the countenance of his soul. Then falling back a few paces she seemed for a moment lost in the mysteries of some early dream, but soon waking, said :

“Did you in childhood play on the

banks of Olentangy with a girl you loved?"

The memory of woman goes into earlier childhood and more vividly than does that of man, and our friend was for several moments lost under the confused throng of scenes thus unexpectedly convoked.

"Ah!" he said arousing himself at last, "There is keen delight in this memory. You ask me to review my childish sports and redivide an innocent glee with a glad comrade, to re-enter the unbroken circle of youth and feel again the invisible force of a kindred heart. Yes, yours *is* the developed face of that sweet companion."

Twilight had sunk into the abyss of night. The moon tardy in his chase had not appeared, and under the



“Did you in childhood play on the banks of Olentangy, with a girl you loved?”

shadow of the low oak there was an interesting though general reminiscence of the life and impressions of each from the day diverse chance had separated the two children to this night when they had been accidentally rejoined in youth.

This conversation we shall not further chronicle than to give a few of the impressions which a varied and eventful life had deeply registered upon the heart of the young man.

"I have always," said he, "desired to stand aloof from the world of traffic, from men and affairs, because the passions, judgment, conscience, reason, the whole soul of man is flexible, and you are familiar with the observation of Herbert Spencer upon our national characteristics, that our fight in the face of one

another's opposition, our selfish rush and self-confident struggle, has depicted upon the general features a kind of 'do or die' expression."

"Though I well remember," said the lady, "that this was a characteristic of your childhood I am sure you have well escaped its registry."

"Thank you," returned the young man in his habitually placid and good-humored manner. "I can more than reciprocate the compliment, for your amiability is innate as your wit is natural, and you have retained the innocent softness of those eyes which under the heat of vivid imagery sometimes flash against the stars."

"But you were speaking of what the philosophers call environment."

"If I have escaped the stamp and die of our national character it is not

because I have lived in solitude, had no ambitions, struggles and defeats, hopes and failures, but because I have always remembered that it were perhaps quite as well to die as to do, and likely better to have lived and not done, than never to have lived at all. I have observed the end of the man of the world. His success is one of the pathetic spectacles of human nature. It doubtless evokes God's sardonic grin.

“What is a man of the world, of the business and social conceptions and conduct of the world, when his day is done? He lives in no impressions of love left along his path, nor bears he any tenderness away. His life is the wild, mad rush of Pluto through the earth without the capture of any Proserpine. Crushed and withered loves

lie in the hearts which have essayed to commune with his, and no pulsations of joy have those known which would have bled for him. Too crushingly has he stepped to leave behind any growths of gratitude and sympathy.

“It is of slight profit to gain a fortune at the cost of all human sensibilities. Yet it remains a fact that whoever is compelled to extract sustenance from the fruits of his unaided toil is crowded into the midst of temptations to meanness, duplicity and fraudulence, which create our miserable mercenary disposition and inevitably endanger the highest qualities of humanity. The dishonesty and depravity produced by this heartless calculation and close-fisted struggle produce our moral skepticism. Penu-

rious distrust, agitated, envious fear, everywhere in business and social circles, breathe out against faith their blighting puffs, laden with demoniacal efficacy to scorch and wither the last animated hope in the human breast. The atmosphere of a *soiree*, a brief sally into this social sycophancy, affects us 'like the dreariness of the heaths and the moaning of the winds.' We are apparently and perhaps really in life's most desolate and barren waste. We long for the refreshing oasis of solitude, or for communion with *one* true friend. There is mental and moral malaria in our business and social atmosphere. Under the murky sky of deceit and distrust, misanthropy is contagious. Spiritual poison passes from soul to soul. An excursion, however brief and rapid,

through this healthless region will leave its traces of disease upon the disposition. The episode will chronicle itself in the character. The deed to-day will show itself in the thought to-morrow. We believe as we act and are acted upon."

"You will," interposed the lady, "make me a misanthrope."

"No; allies of Satan are we in even a mementary and passive assent to the necessity of these selfish methods, and much more the children of hell in our skepticism of every honest and virtuous impulse, in the depravity of our motives, and in our measures of success, in our silence under the egotism and arrogance with which such men, and I regret to add such women, consider all good people stupid, and think him only wise who

believes in neither soul nor sentiments, and makes self-interest the mainspring of actions and life."

"You speak of hell," said the lady, "as though it were a veritable place; I have read a Persian proverb which says it is but a spark of the useless troubles we have given ourselves."

"I think as many miseries arise," responded the young man, "from the pains we uselessly give one another. Anticipated joys are thwarted by our associates. Humanity is the cause of our defeat and agitation. People imagine that by hindering the joys of others they increase their own. The gaiety of children annoys the repose of age, satiated manhood is envious of the delights and gratifications of youth, each imagines himself 'called to search and try the hearts of others,'

and the morbid and morose with 'sour visages enough to scare ye,' warn and interfere against every pleasure.

"Thus perversity and cursedness render life a perpetual agitation, labor and disappointment. The trust and confidence of youth and young love soon sink into melancholy and misanthropy under the heavy and inevitable thought that its friends are fewer and less true than they seem. Fruitless wishes, vain hopes, unsatisfied desires and affections, triply emphasize life's only lesson—that we will never obtain what we expect. The multiplicity of years is but its repetition and rehearsal until we worship at that shrine which promises a quiet and passive peace, the absorption of all desires into senseless Nirvana. Until then,

life is a weary effort after the unattainable, a fitful struggle for things we are never to receive, a striving for what we are not to attain. It possesses three parts—a delusive hope, a spasmodic effort, a sinking despair. Sooner or later every bark is wrecked ‘in the vain attempt to reach the unreachable.’ If we do not, in early life, learn how it will go with us by observing how it has gone with others, we will, in later life, learn how it has gone with others through knowledge of how it goes with ourselves.”

“But is it not true,” asked the lady, “that life’s peace, that its contentment and joy, its only good and real glory, depend upon those ties which bind heart to heart, upon the sympathies and sensibilities, upon the constancy and trust which you say are

violated and crushed by the deceit and heartlessness of envious, mercenary and selfish spirits?"

"True, Fair Oracle," said the young man, with a sympathy almost enthusiastic, "we cannot live upon bread nor bullion, but must absorb the essence of God, and God's divinest manifestations are through sacred and inviolable friendships. Distrust of human sanctities is the saddest infidelity. Faithless in man is faithless in God, and a mote in a brother's eye is a defect in divinity. Upon what shall confidence rest when the highest power of virtue succumbs to vice? What shall support the heart upon the discovery of defects in her, or in him, who has been the object of our adoration? When sympathy stabs, when love hates, when energy faints,

when fidelity betrays, when virtue falls, the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl is broken."

"But," replied the lady, "we must restore our hearts by restoration of frankness, sincerity and honor, by fervent friendships and faithful loves. In the true order of society what is now most deprecated, must be most valued. Joy and peace are impossible without confidence and trust. We should see but the bright side of every being. We should not repeat the weakness of any person. Entertain me with the nobleness of your friend. Tell me the best of the good and only the good of the best, for unless the atmosphere of life is brilliant and beautiful with good will and kindness, it is not well worth inhaling. I think it wise to promote and conserve the purity and

innocence, the faith and simplicity of childhood. Nor can I see why impertinence and skepticism should forestall the pleasures of youth's pure and natural affections. It is doubtful if there be any other time of life of equal satisfaction, unless these affections and fancies are carried through their natural development to the stronger, deeper friendships and loves of maturer age. Where the few bright joys of this innocent affection are disturbed and frightened away by our bitter and stoical wisdom, we know nothing more of the felicities of life. The only pleasure and pride of age is often the memory and rehearsal of these experiences. Do you know I have a little garden in my soul for the cultivation of heart's ease ?”

“Ah, my lady, the attractions of your heart have increased with the traceless tread of slippered summers across your brow. In that garden you have had the happiness to render spiritual flowers perennial. Unmolested in effort, unmolesting in conduct, should be the condition and spirit of all. What is joy to life is good, what is grief and woe is evil. If faith is folly and love a madness, since under these states the mind sees its divinest ideals and the soul reaches its greatest capacity of thought and action, I do not crave the early return of barren sanity. Does it not conduce to our happiness, my sweet friend, to know the lovable? And add to our delight to know the joyous? Knowledge of virtue savors life; a morning glance of purity sweet-

ens the day ; an embrace of love renders the night divine."

Our friend accompanied these words with appropriate gestures of affection.

"You believe all those beautiful ideas?" said the lady, with genuine surprise, the cause of which is a little doubtful, and with some coquetry in her glance and manner.

"Ah, my lady," replied the young man, "how could I in your presence disbelieve amiability and affinity? How could I from this shadow look at the moon, the light clouds flung athwart the sky, at the hills and black woods across the placid lake, and disbelieve the Night, and Poetry. Yes," continued the lover in a cool rhapsody of enthusiasm unique with himself, "I believe Hope and Buoyancy and Faith. I believe friendship and sacri-

fice, devotion and worship and wonder, I believe sympathy and beauty and thought, I believe the surgings of the spirit, the waves of the sea of Soul, the tides of aspiration in answer to the attractions of heaven. I believe earth and sky, sunshine and air, and the life they create. I believe the mountain and plain, the water and wind, smoke, fire, hail, and the grandeur, awe, and inspiration they arouse: for I believe in Trust and in Love and in God."

"My sweet love," continued the young man, modulating and modifying his tone and manner, "to look into those eyes, two heavens, black abysses too deep for stars, fills me with breathless ethereal hope, and swings my soul aloft on wingless buoyancy between the worlds."

"I have already once taken liberty," said the young lady, demurely, "to call you out of the sky."

"Your graces," said the youth, "should be above the clouds."

"Out of sight?" said the lady.

"No, for I should follow them."

"Are you not contented here?"

"More than contented: I am hopeful."

"Of what?"

"Of obtaining happiness."

"Have you not received all?"

"No," replied the lover, again pressing her pliable form to his bosom and covering her face, lips and forehead with rapturous kisses, "sweet lady, you have given much, but not the highest bliss."

In another hour day will stripe the eastern sky. For this brief time we

shall not violate the sanctity of two lovers. We retire. God has created night to cover scenes that should rest under an eternal veil.

Under the dawn the young man sees his lady safely home. *Is she safe?*

That incident has occurred the first experience of which creates an epoch in the human mind. Man invariably feels himself more a man, woman *is* more womanly. The broken sparkle of the maiden's eye is by marriage, or the equivalent of marriage, refined into a subdued and steady fire; the gaze is no longer wide-eyed and direct, but is furtive and somewhat downward the soul shielding itself under the drooping lids. The countenance is more clear and crimson, the smile more *significantly* wreathed, the voice softer, the heart more tender and affectionate.

But certainly it was to trace quite a different effect upon the heart of the young man that we have followed him into the morning.

“It is strange,” murmured he to himself as he made his way through the forest. “My friend tells me she has a lover who adores her as the paragon of virtue, as *I* till *now*, have adored another. “Ah!” cried he with a sigh, “in whose arms has *she* this night slumbered?”

He cast his restless, sweeping eyes through the heavens, sighed longer but lower than before, and wondered that the ONCE in all time he had wished power, he lacked it, and now, naught caring, power too much possessed. Then he remembered that here he had been the *acting*, hitherto, the ACTED UPON !

REFLECTIONS.

The object of God in crossing us in love is to teach us to get along without those we love. It is a lesson so arduous that many people, especially women, never can learn it, but when learned we become deified, are gods, and rule our existence with uncompanied sway.

Patience is what a man most needs, because what he least has. I suppose were I woman, I would not express my present sorrow.

We can with such devoted love so adore a human emanation of the

Celestial as to bring into our quickened vision some form and shape out of the thick darkness where God is.

Here are the three states of man: No love—petty purposes and narrow action, a bubble on the surface of the human sea; True love requited—a noble and generous purpose, broad vision, magnanimity, and a constant blessing; Love unrequited—a deepened expanded soul, damned with a bitter sense of its damnation, all its holy impulses plucked out by the roots, its castles of joy and hope tottering ruins, a devastated soul.

Love rising in two souls as a tidal wave, sweeps away customs, laws, morals, religions, vows, traditions, and

carries man and woman, sealed in an embrace of despair and panic, out and farther out over family and honor and pride, till they strike the reef of death and are washed onto the bosom of the deep.

Love flowing through two souls like a fountain from God lifts them in honor and freedom and joy and floats them buoyant with poise and equipoise through the channel of time.

But love rising in one soul to a dead level with life, like a swamp on a plain, allowing the spirit no outlet, no ebbing nor flowing, emanates vapors malignant to man, that poison the life and disorder the brain.

Within us is an intricate un-understandible piece of spiritual mechanism by which every step, stroke, word,

act, thought, aspiration, hope, love, ALL under the range of possible activity, is self-registered. I am oblivious to all but that to which I would God I could be oblivious. Some things I must write to remember, others, unwritten, I remember too well. A tragic experience must blast a high hope, wither the spirit as with a breath from hell. Its effects may endure forever, but the emotions of the moment, the thoughts aroused during the event, very soon are gone beyond recall.

That loss of ambition, that resignation of hope, that apathy of love wrongly called peace, is the somnambulism of a soul exhausted beyond the possibility of repose.

One will find LOVE to be the necessity, not any particular *object* of love. Away with folly then! Utilize the sex. Passions of the heart are hungers to be fed, insatiable, of infinite capacity.

Love is the endless multiple of human wishes, the caprice of woman, the humiliation of man! In youth it is fever, to the aged peace, the young maiden's dream, the old maid's lament, the widow's bliss. In economics it is our way to fortune, in politics the intrigue, in society the assignation. In nature's symphony it is the chorus of flowers. In the low it is lust, in the high it is heaven. It is the growl of the den, the word of the dove, the eye of the virgin.

Now we sweep
The wrecks into nothingness!
Fondly we weep
The beauty that's gone!
Thou 'mongst the sons of earth,
Lofty and mighty one,
Build it once more!
In thine own bosom the lost world restore!
Now with unclouded sense
Enter a new career;
Songs shall salute thine ear,
Ne'er heard before!

GOETHE.

IN ANOTHER GARDEN.

"You are incorrigible."

"In the book you yesterday returned were a hundred marked passages that gave me hope and bade me come."

"You are romantic."

"My lady, how can I express to you the truth and not appear romantic? The real is the unseen; tangibility is transient. When I recall an incident of our association you remember and admit the event. But that is insignificant. An emotion you will accept as real, only the thousand impossible joys it promises render it incredible. You, being woman, cannot deny the fact of hope; the things hoped are so

transcendent, however, that we suspect it is the meanest liar of the heart. The dancing and sport of the little god too emphatically announces his presence within, yet he swashes such a lurid future, that we fear he is a part of the deceit of the Great God."

"But I am incapable of awaking such devotion."

"Believe then that through you, the Beautiful, I worship the Divine, the vision beyond."

"You must see me as a woman only."

"I have learned that love creates, it does not deceive. Illusions are of first love, the dawn of imagination, the hour of spectres when the radiant and serene walk with an everlasting air. But as you will I see you as woman—sea of molten life—flash from a

hidden world—lurid flame of God!
Ah lady, my heart is unrestrainable;
it throbs against the stars; I must rend
that feminine veil and leap into the
magic realm of your volatile soul.”

“Only as a stealthy angel bending
o’er a precipice can my kisses greet
thee.”

“Ah, madam, are these the loftiest
phases of love? and this the deepest
bliss of the emotions? Can God ele-
vate our serene destiny? Do we not
revel in the most splendid attainments
of the heart? and is not our love the
refuge of the sweetest sentiments of
the soul? An all-embracing sym-
pathy. What infinitude of charm
and beauty rushes into our open
future! Possession forever, but its
fullness never attained! Constant
bestowal, yet blisses unbestowed!

This is Woman ! this is Enigma ! this
is Life! Delicate aggression and
hopeful soul attend me ever in the
ecstasies of this siege of grace ever
yielding but never won ! Rest me,
O God, forever in this bosom of love !

Ah heaven ! My heart, my heart,
support me ! What shriek was that ?

The agony of a mother bearing her
child.

Or the exultation of a child coming
into the world ?

The two commingled.

Heaven and hell attuned together !
In the name of both I surrender. The
husband is lord of the night. Love
has usurped his privilege by distort-
ing the day. His is the greater con-
venience, ours the superior knowl-
edge. Neither of confidence can
boast, since she is his when she must
be, and we are told only what she as-
sumes we know. Equally duped are
both. He only who is present sways
woman's heart.

The child is born under the twilight.
To resemble love is but a psychological
law. To be love's perfect child is im-
possible, for woman belonging once
to man is physically his forever.

The constant guest hath come. In-
effable art of God to design the most
beautiful sweetest piece of nature for
the caprice and comfort of the most
innocent, woman's bosom for the babe.

Blissful repose, adieu ! Curses on
this progeny if its countenance doth
not dissemble !



“The constant guest hath come.”

A LETTER.

MY LOVE:

Are you as lonely to-day as I? and when with me are you as I with you never weary? Two lovers should not be separated on a bright day, for when nature sings the heart is filled with longings nothing can appease but present love. Nor on a dark day, for when nature sighs the heart is filled with shadows nothing can dispel but the light of sympathetic souls. Ah! that I could this day have your kisses as the sun has this morning kissed the fields! and receive love from your eyes as the fields are now glancing up to heaven! and be enveloped in the aroma of your kind heart as the roses

distil their perfume on the sweet caressing air! What would your presence be when the contemplation of your love lifts my soul serene to God! Is there aught on earth worth a minute of life but love? or aught else in heaven that can impart an element of bliss? Was not that then my supreme moment of Eternity when I was in your arms! I fling into heaven a storm of kisses that they may rain upon your face and lips.

ABSENCE.

In nature's mutability we crave some element of permanence. We wish to believe the spirit of man is divine. We hope the suggestions of the heart in its highest state are true. We are wild for an eternity of the deepest emotions. It is disheartening to be driven to the thought that hope is ever a delusive phantom. The feelings of a man of faith, of one who *longs* for faith, will lament the fading memory of a friend. The cup of lethe is bitter drank to pure and holy love.

Yet in the memory of a happy past is the bitterness of a wretched present. 'Tis a contemplation we seek,

though it sickens us. The mind cannot deeply concern itself with present objects when under the thralldom of absent love. The imagination cannot wander, but centers on one face and form. 'Tis before us by day, 'tis in our dreams by night. All the faculties of invention contrive how old joys may be renewed. The will bends its energies to one end; the mind is absorbed in the contemplation of one object; the forces of the heart center upon one hope. The black clouds of despair hover in the mental horizon, the passions arise with the sweep and swing of tempest, the lucid elements sway and toss, the depths of spirit heave with the turbulence of a surging sea and the soul wails for the peace of oblivion.

It is questionable, however, whether

even under this deepest woe of absence we are willing selfishly for the sake of our own peace to throw away all thought of one who has afforded us the highest pleasure of life. To that friend who has planted joy within my heart falls an eternal inheritance; a living habitation not made with hands, a lasting abode, a never-fading remembrance. I would not give my friend the pain which would arise from my peace when absent. *"I want to know all about what you have been doing since I left you. Have you been very lonely? I hope not, and yet I am selfish enough to grieve if you had not missed me."* Worth a hundred affirmations of friendship, worth all the verbal protestations of love is one such candid word. Who would wish that his friends would wish to be

forgotten! In light esteem must they hold friendship who are not grieved at being thrown from the thoughts of the absent. "Seek to forget me," are the most painful words friend can hear from friend at parting, unless indeed we can feel that it is the sigh of sacrifice, that the friend would be forgotten who cannot forget, that the prayer is a conquest over self, born not of the indifference of superficial attachment but of the generous spirit of a deep, unending love.

*Oh, more welcome far
The grasp of death than of the frigid hand
That passively resigns me.*

The torture of the first months of absence, the deep unrest of such intense longing could not be perpetuated. The chafing of the sea would

wear away its shores. Peace comes not by forgetfulness, however, but by a higher adoration. Love becomes less intense, none the less true, and more beautiful. The imagination dwells upon the ideal of the absent. In the presence of beauty we desire its complete and perfect possession, we crave the blessings it can impart; our unrest is deeper; our strife concentrates every nerve and fibre of body and brain in all the intense agony of aspiration, because beauty present we believe to be attainable. But when the cherished object is wrung from our arms, when irrevocable fate tears asunder these hearts knit in common affinity, though the first season is passed in smothering our passionate grief, love eventually ascends into the spiritual. After the first surgings of

the heart have subsided, beauty exists for the intellect. It is then to be contemplated as a form of truth, not felt and cherished for what it may bestow :

*My spirit soars away serene and free,
And by the strength of its divine emotion,
Transforms its love to all a saint's devotion,
Refines desire into idolatry.*

Nor is it unlikely that this idealization may under some circumstances render absence more painful. There arises a contrast too great between this object and people we daily meet. There is not only the superior charm which the absent one possesses, in our estimation, but there is the difference between the ideal and the real. Love does not contemplate and adore the actual. Its depth, fervor and sincerity, sanctify the object.

It is a question for psychologists whether first love is not a natural development of man; whether it does not belong to a particular stage of the heart's growth; whether it is not the being's blossom and bloom, due to the natural unfolding of the emotions rather than exclusively to the influence of the man or maiden who happens to be its object. *Happens* to be its object—for assuming the truth of this suggestion, the affections would attach themselves to some person within the range of the lover's association. The destiny would be to love, and love at once, and some individual of the circle of acquaintances must be elevated into the ideal and receive the homage of this fresh-blown heart. The lover *must* perceive goodness and beauty for it is within his soul, a new

force, an artist who paints the outer world and creates a necessity to bestow reverence.

Annie Jameson says, "We are not to look into *Bertram's* character for the spring and source of *Helena's* love for him, but into her own." Schlegel says, "In most of his plays, Shakespeare treats love more as an affair of the imagination than of the heart." Emerson speaks of "The illusion of love, which attributes to the beloved person all which that person shares with his or her family, sex, age or condition, Nay with the human mind itself." And Coleridge expatiated on the manner in which young poets, out of the product of their own fruitful imaginations, have clothed very ordinary women with the beauty of grace and accomplish-

ment, and have thus been won by the creations of their fancy rather than by attractions in the personal object of their affections.

Furthermore; as supporting this suggestion, we have the indubitable fact that first love awakens sensations which belong to no later attachment. It possesses an element of the spiritual not aroused by later influences. It imparts a sense of the near presence of the unseen, of the eternal, the infinite. We believe in the endurance of the first love. We have a shuddering fear that the second may end, and we be driven to the belief that the divinest feelings are brief and transient as the day, and we beseech our lady with a piteous longing she can but imperfectly understand that she will bind us to her by every possible

pledge, that she will demand constancy and truth, so that her confidence and trust may ennoble us, that her love may never be withdrawn, that it may ever rule in our heart, be our enduring hope and secure us to eternal good.

From this view, is not the second the real love? due alone to the influence of its object? awakened by a personal presence which answers every longing of the developed nature? a feeling called up by natural attractions rather than coming up by development and going unconsciously out to seek an object.

There can be no doubt that under presence and bestowal first love would endure a pure and holy feeling; but another indication that it may be but a development of the emotional na-

ture, is that the same maiden cannot a second time awaken the feelings belonging to first love. It is lamentable that the state has passed never to recur. No influence can ever recall the Divine and Infinite which strengthen, elevate and inspire this intensity of ideal devotion.

Severed from the object of first love, this adoration is the source of an insupportable agony, but an agony of mind rather than of heart. We contemplate the absent one in all the radiance of spiritual beauty. We feel that our being is a growth, and imagine the tree of life must perish, removed afar from this glowing sun. We could rest in peace, and our happiness flourish under the serene smile, seeking no closer approach, no greater condescension,

than Dante craved from Beatrice—her “Salutation.” Fortunate the maiden whose feelings and capability can respond to the divine function of moulding the destiny of another heart, of shaping the future of man, of ever watching an unfolding life conforming itself to her conceptions, aspiring to the rewards of her love, bending to her wishes the strength which bends to naught besides, and paying to her the tribute of its worship and honor of its work—and happy he on whom this fortune tends. But forlorn is the prospective life of her whom the destinies of love impel into another path and the opposite sphere—whose ambition perceptibly yields under the stress of unceasing toil, the brokenness of whose spirit is revealed in the drooping

shoulders which once were erect, the lagging step, the indifferent bearing, which once were firm and proud, the languid conversation which once was animated and gay—who abandoning her aim and hope debases another's ideal, sinks for rest and ease under the shadow of a decayed tree, yields herself a living sacrifice into the arms of one whose life is in the past, and whom the fire of love can reanimate but for a day, and thus becomes a vassal to the insipidity of age rather than a companion to youth and goddess of the destiny of a life. Fortunate he who losing the object of his love and losing also his love, may preserve its first effects, and ever know because the heavens were opened once, there ARE heavens to be opened. Implore the gods, Oh lover, that though

you lose the loved, and lose faith in
the loved, you lose not faith in *your*
love, that you may dwell, though not
with happiness and her, yet alone
with Love in that sphere of ecstatic
virtue, which is Love's own.

Will it not last?
Oh! make it Eternal!
Is it soon past?
Love, the Supernal?

What brought me into life? That shall carry me away. I was left here by woman. Perhaps love holds waiting arms to clasp me when I go. I shall walk on serenely—that is, indifferently—and laugh together with God as we have often done at our ironies. And as I continue on toward the End with my sardonic and amusing Companion, I still shall throw to hovering hope and good-cheer, hospitality from my eye.





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